



ALCESTIS.

Class of 1900.

THE
ALCESTIS OF EURIPIDES

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY

The Class of 1900 of Beloit College

FOR

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March 4, 1898

That strangest, saddest, sweetest song.

—*Robert Browning.*

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CLASSICS

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THE ALCESTIS OF EURIPIDES.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

APOLLO, the sun-god.....	HERACLES, guest of Admetus.....
L. C. Pollock	F. C. Ensign
DEATH.....	PHERES, aged father of Admetus.....
C. W. WATT	J. L. Whitney
ALCESTIS, queen of Pherae.	WIFE OF PHERES. J. J. Fisher
Guy Hebbard	MAID-SERVANT.....
ADMETUS, king of Pherae..	A. E. Bleekman
H. R. Mussey	MAN-SERVANT.... J. L. Nelson
EUMELUS, their son.....	
Master Luther Reed	

CHORUS OF CITIZENS OF PHERAE—Messrs. McQueen (leader), Eaton (musical director), Allen, Burns, Pollock, Ralph, Watt and Messrs. Brown, Buell, Bushnell, Christie, Curtis, Gage, Porter, Smale, Smith, and Vogt.

THE KING'S BODY-GUARD—Messrs. Bosworth, Ennis, Stahl, and Hurlbut. With many other guards, bearers and attendants.

COMMITTEES.

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ARGUMENT.

Admetus, King of Pherae, in Thessaly, had once kindly received Apollo when that god had been, for a while, banished from Olympus and compelled to be a servant to a mortal. Afterwards, when the king was sick and at the point of death, Apollo won the consent of the Fates that

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the king's life should be spared, provided that some one could be found to die in his stead. His father, his mother, and his friends declined to save him thus; but his wife, Alcestis, offers to die for the sake of her husband. The drama opens with the approach of Death to claim his victim.

Just after Alcestis has died, when the funeral rites are in progress, Heracles arrives in Pherae, journeying toward Thrace upon one of his "labors." Admetus receives him hospitably, hiding his own cause of grief, letting Heracles suppose that some stranger's funeral is in progress. When Heracles learns from a servant that it is Alcestis who has died, he goes to the tomb, wrestles with Death, recovers Alcestis and in his own crafty style restores her to the happy king.

ALCESTIS.

SCENE.—The Grove in front of the Palace of Admetus.

PROLOGUE.

Enter APOLLO.

APOLLO. O palace of Admetus, where I deigned,
Although a god, to take a servant's fare!

When Zeus slew Aesculapius, my son,
By hurling on his breast his bolt of fire,
Then I, enraged, the mighty Cyclops slew,
Who forge for Zeus his awful thunderbolts.
In punishment for that, my father bade
That I should serve for hire with mortal men.
So coming to this land I tended herds
In King Admetus' hospitable realm
And have preserved his house until today,
Since Pheres' son I found a godly man,
Whose piety was equal to my own;
And him I saved from death by cheating fate.
The goddesses allowed me this: that King
Admetus should escape his impending death
If he could find a soul to take his place.
But having tried and tested all his friends,
His aged father, and his mother too,
He found not one to suffer death for him
And view life's light no more,—except his wife.

So now within the house she breathes her last
Supported in the arms of weeping friends;
For fate decreed that she should die to-day.
So lest upon me in this home should come
The stains of death, I leave its sheltering roof,
But nay,—near by I see the form of Death,
The priest of the dead, who comes intent to bear

The queen to Hades' realms. Meet time is this
For him to come, since he observes this day
On which 'tis destined that Alcestis die.

Enter DEATH.

DEATH. Ho! Ho! Ha! Ha!

Why art thou, O Apollo, still lingering here
At the front of the palace? My heart hath its fear
Thou wouldst limit the rights of the gods of the dead,
And stay the dread sway of our dooms and our dread.
'Tis enough that thy meddling protected Admetus,
Once cheating the Fates in thy zeal to defeat us;
Yet now still again with thy hand on thy bow
Thou wouldst rescue Alcestis who promised to go
To her death in the stead of Admetus.

AP. Fear not! Know well my cause is just and clear.

DEA. What need of weapons if thy cause is just.

AP. It is my custom thus to bear this bow.

DEA. It is thy custom thus to aid this King!

AP. In sorrow at the sorrows of my friends.

DEA. But wilt thou rob me of a second corpse

AP. I never took thy dead from thee by force.

DEA. How is it then Admetus still lives on?

AP. He gave Alcestis as his substitute.

DEA. Whom I am come to carry to my depths.

AP. Take her and go, I doubt of thy consent —

DEA. To slay them whom I ought? That is my right!

AP. Nay; rather slay the old whose race is run.

DEA. I know thy logic and detect thy wish.

AP. Tell me:—how may Alcestis reach old age?

DEA. She never can! My honors please me too.

AP. Thou wilt not get more than the single life.

DEA. I gain more glory when the youthful die.

AP. But aged wives receive more pomp at death.

DEA. You would shape my laws, O Phoebus, for the rich.

AP. Old Death is shrewder than I thought he was!

DEA. The rich would buy the chance of dying old.

AP. Then wilt thou buy my deepest gratitude?

DEA. Nay, I will not; you know my old-time ways--

AP. Yes; ways detested both by gods and men!

DEA. Thou canst not have *all* things thou oughtst not have.

AP. But yield thou shalt, though cruel be thy heart;
 A man of strength approacheth Pheres' halls,
 Sent by his master to the land of Thrace,
 Snow-capped and cold, to bring for Eurystheus thence
 A prize, of chariot and horses twain.
 He, while a guest within Admetus' house,
 By force shall wrest this woman from thy grasp
 Still thou wilt not deserve our grateful thanks;
 Thou dost thine ugly part and winnest my hate!

DEA. Too long thou hast talked, nor shalt thou gain thereby.
 To Hades' hall this woman shall descend.
 I go for her; my sword begins its work;
 That life is sacred to the gods of death
 Whose head and hair this blade shall consecrate.

EXEUNT.

PARODOS. [Entry of the Chorus.]

Music composed in the Phrygian mode by Prof. B. D. Allen.

STROPHE A.

CHO. What means this silence everywhere?
 Admetus' house is still.
 No friend of ours comes forth to bear
 The news of good or ill.
 We know not if Alcestis lives
 And sees the light of life,
 Or if the King already grieves
 For his devoted wife.

ANTISTROPHE A.

Canst hear the sound of wailing shrill
 Or hands that tear the hair?
 Oh Healing-God, arise and still
 The storm of our despair!
 Alcestis' spirit is not fled!

How know ye more than we?
 We see no honors for the dead
 In due solemnity.

STROPHE B.

There are no signs of Hades there,
 No lustral vase to stand
 Before the door, nor tress of hair,
 Nor din of mourner's hand.
 And yet to day is the fatal day!—
 What day? Sing on, we crave.
 The day she goes her lonely way
 To the dark and silent grave.

ANTISTROPHE B.

No messenger or ship can bring
 The drugs of foreign shore;
 The gods to whom we pray and sing
 Are merciful no more;
 For since the Son of Light delays
 In Hades' darkling rooms,
 No hopeful hand is reached to raise
 The fallen from their dooms.

CHORUS-LEADER—But now a servant issues from the door.

[*Enter a maid-servant.*]

She moans and weeps! What news am I to hear?
 'Tis pardonable to grieve if aught befalls
 Thy master or thy mistress. We would ask
 If still our lady lives, or is she dead?

FIRST EPISODE.

MAID-SERVANT. She lives, and yet is dead, 'tis fair to say.

CH. How can the lady die and be alive?

MAID. Even now she drops her head and breathes her last.

CH. Then, wretched king, of what a wife bereft!

MAID. Until he suffers it, he cannot know.

CH. Is there no hope her life may yet be spared?

MAID. The fated day now presses on her hard.

CH. Are all the funeral draperies prepared?

MAID. Yes, all is ready for her burial-rites.

CH. Now let her know in dying she is far

The best and noblest woman 'neath our sun.

MAID-SERV.—The best of women, surely, who disputes?

To rival her, what must a woman be?

How could wife better reverence her lord

Than by her willingness to die for him?

Now everybody knows Alcestis' love,

Yet, hear and marvel at her homely ways:

For when she knew the fated day was here

She bathed her fair white skin in fountain floods

And, taking out her lovely draperies

From chests of cedar-wood, she robed herself;

Then stood before the household shrine and prayed :

"Goddess, since now I go beneath the earth,

"I kneel before thee with this last request—

"This final favor—guard my orphaned ones.

"For both of them secure a marriage noble,

"And may they never share their mother's lot,

"But both live out long lives of happiness

"To die at last in their ancestral land."

To every altar in Admetus' house

She then approached. With leaves of myrtle boughs

She garlanded them all. At each she prayed,

But did not weep, as yet, nor groan, nor change

Her sweet complexion for her fate's approach;

But in her room, prostrated on her couch

Ah, there she shed her tears, and wept, and said:

"Oh couch, where I gave up my maiden-hood

"For this man's sake for whose sake now I die,

"Farewell—I hate thee not, I love thee—but—

"'Tis only I—I feared my husband's death

"And so for him I die and he lives on.

"And thee, my couch, some other wife shall know,

"Perhaps no truer but—more fortunate."

She falls upon her couch and kisses it

And sprinkles it with gushing tides of tears;

Then, satiate with sobs, she staggers forth
 To leave the bed, but comes to it again
 And flings her fainting form prostrated there.
 The children held their mother's gown and cried,
 Until the dying woman in her arms
 Clasped now the boy and now the girl in love.
 Meantime we servants pityingly wailed.
 She heard, and gave her hand to each to take—
 No slave of us too lowly in her sight
 To get and give the greetings of FAREWELL.

Such are the troubles in Admetus' palace;
 If he had died—why, he would just have died;
 But in escaping death he gains a sorrow
 That must abide on him forever more.

CH. Does King Admetus mourn in misery
 That he is robbed of such a noble wife?

MAID. Indeed he mourns. He holds her in his arms
 Beseeching that she leave him not, in vain,
 For with disease she wastes away and dies;
 Her hands hang heavy and she scarcely breathes,
 But yet she wills to come into the sun
 To see once more its circle and its rays
 Before her palace door one dear last time.

But I will go announce your presence here
 All men are not so loyal to their lords
 To make them kindly visits in distress.
 I recognize my master's year-long friends.—*Exit.*

FIRST STASIMON [*Choral Song.*]

Music composed by H. D. Eaton.

STROPHE.

O Zeus! What release from these troubles can come?
 What escape from misfortunes that cloud the king's home?
 What word from within?
 Must our mourning begin
 With the shearing of tresses
 And sweeping black dresses?

'Tis too certain,—too certain;—and yet oh my friends
Let us pray to the gods for their power never ends:

Hear, Apollo, our cries,
And arise! and arise
To deliver the man,
As a god only can !

As before thou hast rescued our king from all harm
So again smite dread Death with thy champion arm!

ANTISTROPHE.

Alas, son of Pheres, no voice shall refuse
To wail as thou wailest the wife thou must lose.

When we hear of her death
We would draw our last breath
With the noose or the knife,—
And an end to our life!

For now, Oh Death-Day of our Queen, as thou nearest,
We call her not dear, but we call her the dearest!

But behold ye! Behold!
How the portals unfold
Where the queen and her king
Come forth while we sing:

“Lamentations!” and bid the whole city reply:

“Lamentations!” for her who is passing to die.

CH.-LEADER. Knowing the past, we are constrained to sing:
Where are the pleasures that marriages bring?
Is not sorrow and sighing the usual thing?
Thus hard is the lot has befallen the king.
He shall find, in the loss of so perfect a wife
That the life that he keeps has become—no life.

SECOND EPISODE.

Enter ALCESTIS, ADMETUS, EUMELUS, and attendants

ALCESTIS. O Sun! Light of day!
Swift cloud-whirls of sky!

ADM. The Sun sees thee and me, unhappy two
Who have done the gods no wrong for which thou diest.

- ALC. Ah Home far away!
A bride there was I!
- ADM. Uplift thyself, poor wife, in fortitude;
Beseech the powerful gods to pity thee.
- ALC. Death's boat, lo, I see
And a form at the oar.
~~It is~~ Charon waits for me
To ferry me o'er. *a*
He calls: "Why delay?
Nay, on! Hasten on!"
With him, on my way,
I soon shall be gone.
- ADM. A bitter boat-ride this you tell us of,
Ill-fated wife; ah me, how deep we are hurt!
- ALC. To the Death-Halls below
He leads—leads me weeping;
His great eye-balls glow!
His dark wings are sweeping!
Unhand! Let me go!—
Unfortunate and creeping
My last path of woe!
- ADM. Path piteous for thy friends, especially
For me and for thy children, suffering too.
- ALC. There! There! Let me lie;—
My feet have no strength;
The Death-god draws nigh;
And night, comes at length
To make dark my eye.
And children—children mine—
You have no mother more!
But I pray Heaven to shine
Upon you, as before!
- ADM. Ah me! sadder than death
I feel thy dying breath;
Thy farewell parting tone
Is leaving us alone.
I care not to live
When thou hast departed;
All life's praise I give

ALC To thee, my true-hearted!
Admetus, since thou seest my dying state,
I long to tell my wishes ere I go.
To show devotion unto thee, I die,
Since for thy life mine own I give, and thou
Art left behind to see the light of days.
In doing this I honor thee, although
I might live on and get as husband him
Of the Thessalian lords I might desire;
And I might still be dwelling in a home
Made ever happy by its lordly wealth;
And yet I neither wished to live if torn
From thee, to see my little children left
As orphans desolate, nor spared my gifts
Of youth and grace in which I used to joy.

It was thy father, and thy mother too,
In selfish love of life, gave up their son
To death, though they had come unto the time
When their decease might seem appropriate,
And when their death might save their son and gain
Unto themselves a glorious renown;
For you alone remain to claim from them
A parent's care and love, and shouldst thou die
They never can have other manly sons.
If they had undertaken the sacrifice
Then thou and I might live together our
Allotted time and thou, alone, would not
Be mourning for thy dying wife nor see
Thy children destitute of a mother's care.
However, we should not complain. Some god
In heaven above has brought this thing to pass.
So let it be! But now I beg that thou
Remember to be grateful unto me,
And freely grant one favor for my sake.
I shall not ask such a favor as I might
In my desert. I cannot ask thee that!
For nothing is as precious as one's life.
But my request is just, thou wilt confess,
For thou art fond of both our little ones

As I am,—if thy father-heart be true.
My wish is this: May these grow up to be
The lord and lady of our royal house.
Wed thou no step-mother unkind to them,
Lest she, more rude than I, in envy lay
Harsh hands upon our children—thine and mine—
Oh, surely thou wilt not do that, I beg,
For scarce so gentle as a viper comes
A step-mother to work her hostile spite
Upon the children of a former wife.

My boy, thou hast thy father for thy tower;
But oh, my girl, how, in thy maiden days,
Canst thou be blessed by her thy father weds,
Who would too surely scandalize thy fame
And wreck thy prospects in thy bloom of youth?
For I shall never deck thee as a bride
Nor comfort thee, my child, in child-birth pangs
Where naught counts kindly as a mother's care,
For I must die,—and not to-morrow,—nor
The next day,—nor the next day after that;—
To-day I shall be named among the lost.
Farewell; be happy. Husband, thou canst boast
Thou hadst the best of women for thy wife,
And, children, ye have had the best of mothers.

CH.-LEADER. Take heart; thy husband, I am bold to say,
Is not so foolish to dispute thy wishes.

ADM. It shall be as thou wishest; tremble not,
For since I had thee living, so in death
Thou, and thou only, shalt be called my wife,—
No maid of Thessaly is good enough
In beauty or in rank to take thy place.
My children are enough; I pray in these
To find the happiness I miss in thee.
My grief for thee is not a year-long thing,
But lasting, lady, as my life shall last.
My father and my mother I will hate
For they were loving only in their talk;
But thou for me didst give the best thou hadst,
And life was spared to me, who am deprived

Of such a mate. What can I do but mourn?
 An end to all convivial feasts; to wreaths
 And to the songs which heretofore have pleased
 My happy home! and may I never care
 To touch again the tuneful lyre, or sing
 Accompanying the Libyan flute! My life
 Will be devoid of joy, bereft of thee.

An image in thy likeness, made by men
 Who know their art, upon thy couch I'll lay,
 Then fall on it and clasp it in my arms
 And call upon my wife's familiar name;
 'Twill seem as though I had my arms around
 My own dear love,—who lives no longer! Cold
 The joy methinks, but yet it might assuage
 My grief. Oh, visit me in dreams, for thus
 Thou wilt rejoice my heart, since sweet it is
 To see one's friends if e'er they come at night.

If Orpheus' tongue and melody were mine
 And I could charm Persephone, or win
 Her spouse, and lead thee out of Hades, then
 Not even Cerberus nor ghostly Charon
 Could keep me from returning thee alive
 To this glad light. But since 'twas not to be,
 Receive me there, when Death o'ertakes me here;
 Prepare my mansion, till I come to thee.
 I bid my servants bury me beside
 Thy corse; the self-same cedar chest shall keep
 Us both. And side by side our forms will lie.
 In death at least I shall not be apart
 From thee, my only true and faithful friend.

CHO. We too as friends will share, oh friend, with thee
 This grief for thy dear wife, our worthy queen.

ALC. Oh children, ye have heard your father say
 That he will never marry any one
 To govern you, or to dishonor me.

ADM. Again I promise and will keep my word.

ALC. For this receive these children from my arms.

ADM. I take so dear a gift from arms so dear.

ALC. Become their mother and make good my loss.

ADM. Deprived of thee they will need my mothering.

ALC. Oh children, when I need to live I die.

ADM. Ah me, what shall I do when thou art lost?

ALC. Time will assuage thy grief; the dead are nought.

ADM. I pray thee take me with thee down to death.

ALC. I am enough to die instead of thee.

ADM. O Fates, of what a wife I am deprived!

ALC. Now darkness comes upon my heavy eyes.

ADM. I am undone if thou desertest me.

ALC. Thou mayst consider me as one that's dead.

ADM. Look up and do not leave thy children thus.

ALC. I would not leave them—but—Farewell, Farewell—

ADM. Yet look on them once more!

ALC. I am as nought.

ADM. What! Leavest thou us?

ALC. Farewell! [*Alceste dies.*]

ADM. Alas, I'm lost!

CH.-LEADER. She is gone—Admetus' wife exists no more.

EUMELUS. Oh, mamma dear is gone;

She doesn't see the sun;

But leaves me here alone

Her little orphaned one!

See, see her hands and eyes;

Father, how still she lies;

O mother, hear me, hear!

It is your little dear

That clings and calls to you,

And climbs to kiss you too.

ADM. She hears you not, nor sees you. You and I,

Oh children, feel the whip of heavy fate.

ENM. I am too young a child

To lose that guidance mild

That made me reconciled

When mamma spoke and smiled.

My sister here and I

Are suffering and cry

For father's lonely pain.

Oh, father, 'twas in vain

That you brought mamma home,

For ere old age could come
 She left us. All our rooms
 Grow dark with funeral-glooms.

CHO. Admetus, thou must bear this heavy grief
 For thou art not the first, nor last of men
 To lose a noble wife; remember too
 That all of us are bound, sometime, to die.

ADM. I understand that well; this grief came not
 With sudden force; long since I tried its power.
 But I will now prepare the funeral.
 Ye must remain and sound a requiem
 To Hades' King, who heeds no sacrifice.
 I bid you men of Thessaly, o'er whom
 I rule, to share this common grief for her,
 And shear your locks, and put on mourning garb;
 Clip, with the shining blades, the flowing manes
 From necks of single horse and chariot team.
 For twelve full months let not the sound of lyre
 Or flute be heard within the city walls;
 For I shall never carry to the grave
 Another friend more dear to me and true.
 She well deserves my praise, who died for me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SECOND STASIMON [*Choral Song.*]

[*Music adapted from Gluck's Alceste and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.*]

STROPHE A.

O, Alcestis, light fast failing,
 Gone to Hades' sunless doom.
 Peace we pray, mid our bewailing,
 Fill thy soul, dispelling gloom.
 Once for all let Hades know,
 And let Charon's song confess,
 That he guides o'er the Stygian flow
 The very queen of nobleness.

ANTISTROPHE A.

When the month's fast circling days
 Bring the glad Carneian feast
 And the full moon spreads her rays
 Gleaming o'er the happy East,
 Then the bards in harmony,
 Tuning flute and harp shall sing,
 Till in deathless praise of thee
 Sparta and glad Athens ring.

STROPHE B.

O for mighty power to save
 Thy sweet life brought home again,
 Back from stern Cocytus' wave
 To the light and love of men.
 Light upon thee fall the clay!
 Thou shalt win an easy grave,
 For thou givest up to-day
 Life for life, thy lord to save.

ANTISTROPHE B.

No love filled his mother's heart
 Meagre soul his father showed;
 Wretches! shrinking to depart,
 For their son, down Hades-road.
 Brightest youth bright future cast—
 But Alcestis paid the price,
 Giving freely to the last,
 Proving love by sacrifice.

THIRD EPISODE.

Enter HERACLES.

HER. Hail, strangers, dwellers in the Pheræ lands,
 Is King Admetus in his royal home?
 CHO. Hail, Heracles, Admetus is within.
 But what adventure brings thee on thy way

To travel through Pheræan Thessaly?

HER. Eurystheus, King of Tiryns, sends me here.

CHO. And whither bound? To what adventure set?

HER. To Thrace, for Diomedes' famous team.

CHO. Canst thou obtain them? Dost thou know that king.

HER. I have never visited the Bistones.

CHO. Thou canst not take those steeds unless thou fightest.

HER. No labor is too hard for Heracles.

CHO. Triumphant, thou wilt return; or dead, remain.

HER. It will not be my first fierce contest won.

CHO. What gain is thine, if thou shalt kill their king?

HER. To Tiryn's ruler I shall drive the steeds.

CHO. But it is difficult to bit their jaws.

HER. Not difficult, unless they breathe forth fire.

CHO. And they eat men with their devouring mouths.

HER. That were a proper food for wilder beasts.

CHO. There thou shalt see their mangers smeared with blood

HER. Whose son boasts he to be, that keeps the steeds?

CHO. A son of Ares, Lord of the Golden Shield.

HER. The sons of Ares must always match my fortune

Which climbs along its hard and up-hill course.

I have to meet them all in fight; at first

It was Lycaon; Cynus after that;

Now third 'tis Diomedes and his colts;—

But none shall ever see Alcmene's son

Display a trembling arm before his foes.

CHO. But lo! our country's sovereign King, Admetus,

Here from the palace portals issues forth.

Enter ADMETUS.

ADM. I wish thee joy, O Perseus' son divine.

HER. Joy too to thee, Admetus, Thessaly's king.

ADM. No joy is for me, despite thy kind intent.

HER. What means this garb of grief, and close-clipped hair?

ADM. Alas! I must inter a friend to-day.

HER. A god hath wrought no evil on thy babes?

ADM. My children in the house are safe and sound.

HER. Thy father died in ripe old age, if dead.

- ADM. No doubt; but he still lives, and mother too.
HER. Thy wife Alcestis hath not caused thee grief?
ADM. I could relate of her a two-fold tale.
HER. Sayst thou that she is dead or yet alive?
ADM. Alive and dead, she complicates my grief.
HER. I do not understand your riddles, friend.
ADM. Do you not know the fate that threatens her?
HER. I know she was to die in place of thee.
ADM. In such a case how can she truly live?
HER. Weep not your wife until her day shall come.
ADM. If soon to die, then dead! And death ends all!
HER. I hold that life and death are different.
ADM. That is thy point of view; I keep mine own.
HER. Why weep? What dear one of thy home hath died.
ADM. A woman is the one we have in mind.
HER. A stranger, or a woman of thy kin?
ADM. A stranger, yes; but precious in our home.
HER. Why did this stranger in thy family die?
ADM. Her father died and left his orphan here.
HER. Alas, I would I found thee not so sad.
ADM. What wilt thou do, or what hast thou in mind?
HER. I mean that I must go to another's hearth.
ADM. No, no, my lord, bring not that grief on me.
HER. But guests are troublesome to hosts in grief.
ADM. The dead have died; so welcome to my house,—
HER. When hosts are sad, then guests ought not to feast.
ADM. Our guest-rooms lie apart. There shalt thou lodge.
HER. O let me go! And thanks a thousand times—
ADM. I must forbid that thou shouldst leave this hearth
For another's. Slaves, conduct this guest to rooms
That lie remote; there throw the chambers wide
And bid the men to make a royal feast;
But bolt securely all the inner doors—
It is not fit that guests should hear our groans.

Exit HERACLES.

- CHO. What dost thou, King? Misfortune presses hard,
And art thou mad enough to welcome guests?

ADM. But if I turned away from home and town
 A guest, and wanderer, would ye praise me more?
 Not so, since thus my trouble were not less,
 But rather I were proved the ruder man.
 So to the griefs already mine add not
 The grief that calls my home inhospitable.
 This prince I always found a noble host
 Whene'er I visited his Argive town.

CHO. If he who comest is such a friend of thine,
 Why hide from him thy present misery?

ADM. He never would consent to enter here
 If he were well aware how deep I'm pained.
 To some, I think, I seem unwise in this,
 Nor will ye praise me, but be sure my house
 Has never learned to thrust away its guests.

‡ [*Exit.*]

[*Music, Greek National Air, 'Εἰς Τὴν 'Ελευθερίαν.*]

THIRD STASIMON [*Choral Song.*]

STROPHE A.

CHO. Royal palace, free to strangers,
 Here Apollo deigned to dwell,
 While the cattle from their mangers
 Listened to the music-spell
 Of his whistling as he led them
 Down the hillside to the dell,
 Where the pastoral piping fed them
 On the tunes they loved so well.
 Hail Admetus, King Admetus,
 Prince Apollo loved thee well!

ANTISTROPHE A.

There in joy to hear thy singing
 Came the spotted lynxes out
 From the forests, and were bringing
 All the tawny lion-rout.

With the dappled fawns beside them
 They went dancing round about
 That great harp that mystified them
 And Apollo's music-shout!
 Hail Apollo, Prince Apollo,
 Join with ours thy music-shout!

STROPHE B.

Rich in flocks is King Admetus
 In his palace by the shore,
 Where his fertile plow-lands greet us
 With their harvest's golden store.
 His dominion he extendeth
 From the sun-set's darkening door
 To where Pelion's Mountain endeth
 And Ægæan billows pour.
 Hail Admetus, King Admetus,
 We are loyal evermore.

ANTISTROPHE B.

Take the stranger to thy dwelling,
 Where thy wife lies newly dead,
 Hiding all thy tears upwelling
 In the welcomes thou hast said;
 Thus thy nobleness is showing
 How a spirit highly bred
 Moves to honor, ever knowing
 Hopes to bless the day of dread.
 Hail Admetus, King Admetus,
 Heaven's light is on thee shed!

FOURTH EPISODE.

Enter ADMETUS AND THE FUNERAL TRAIN.

ADM. Phææan men, steadfastly present here,
 Already the attendants bear along
 The corpse, prepared and clothed for tomb and pyre.
 So ye, as custom is, speak your farewell

To her departing on the last, sad way.

CHO.-LEADER. I see thine aged father coming nigh,
And with him servants bearing in their hands
Adornment for thy wife, fit honors for the dead.

Enter PHERES AND HIS WIFE.

PHERES. I come, oh son, and share thy sorrowings,
Since no one will dispute that thou hast lost
A noble and a prudent wife. And yet
We needs must bear hard grief, though hard to bear!
Receive this decoration. Let it go
With her beneath the earth. We ought to heap
Much love on her who died for thee, my son, -
Who spared my child, nor suffered me to die,
Grieving for thee, in melancholy age.
Most noble she who dared this noble deed!
O thou who hast preserved my son and me
From destined death, farewell, and mayst thou find
A due reward in life beyond the grave.
Such unions bless men, or all marriage fails.

ADM. Thou comest to this funeral unbid!
Thy presence here is hateful; for thy gifts
She shall not wear, nor at her burial
Need aught of thine. Ah that was fitter time
To sympathize with me, when I was doomed!
But then thou stoodst aside, tho' thou wert old,
And didst allow the youthful wife to die.
Yet now canst thou lament my dead and mourn?
Thou wast not truly father of this king,
Nor she my mother, tho' she claims to be.
My so-called parents never gave me birth.
It must be that of slaves' blood I was born
And substituted as this woman's child.
Well didst thou show, when thou wert put to test,
The man within thee. Never may I trace
My pedigree to thee. Thy lack of soul
Hath had pre-eminence in all the world!
For at thy age and near the bounds of life
Thou couldst not wish, thou couldst not dare to die

To save thy son, but hast allowed my wife
To waste away, whom I might justly call
Mine only father and my mother too.

How fair for thee that struggle would have been
To die for thine own offspring, since short remained
In any case the time thou hadst to stay.
Then had I lived with her in after-time
Nor mourned my woes, left single and alone.
Whatever pleasures any man should taste
Thou hast enjoyed. Thy youth was past in power;
I was thy son, and heir to thine estate;
Not childless hadst thou died and left thy home
To strangers. Neither canst thou fairly say
Thou gavest me to die because I paid
Thee not due reverence. I was a son
Who ever honored thee most filially,
And now, for this, such thanks thou renderest!
Thou canst not be too quick in getting sons
To cherish thee when old, and after death
To lay thee out and clothe thee for thy tomb;—
Thou shalt no more depend on me for that,
For I am dead to thee. But if I chance
To find another savior, I will call
Myself his son and the prop of his old age.

The aged idly pray that death may come,
Find fault with years and the long decline of life;
But when death nears, their wish to die is gone
And hoary age no longer is a burden.

CHO. Be still. Sufficient is the trouble now;
Urge not thy father till his passion rage.

PHERES. Whom thinkest thou, son, that thou art hounding
with

That speech of impudence? Some Lydian slave
Or Phrygian bought in barter? Knowst thou not
I am Thessalian? Born of parents free,
Thessalians too? Thou art grown insolent.
But hurling boyish taunts thou shalt not strike
And go unstruck. I got and reared thee lord
Of Pheres' palace. Duty does not bid

Me die for thee. There's no ancestral law
 Nor legislation of the Grecian states
 That makes a father die to save his son.
 For good or bad thy life is all thine own.
 What Fortune gave thee that is thine to keep
 With sovereign sway o'er many men. I left
 Besides unmeasured lands to thee. 'Twas right I should,
 For thus my father left the same to me.
 In what respect, then, have I done thee wrong?
 Thou needst not die for me nor I for thee;
 Thou lovest the light. Is light not dear to me?
 Long lasts our time of darkness after death.
 The time of life, how short, and yet how sweet!
 Thou shamelessly hast sought to escape from death
 And hast outlived the allotted span of life
 By slaying *her*. Then call'st thou me a coward?
 Thou craven, weaker than thy wife who gave
 Her life in barter for thy fine young soul!
 Why, thou needst never die! At any time
 Thou mayst persuade new wives to die for thee.
 And now, though fearing death thyself, shalt thou
 Revile the friends who would not take thy place?
 Be still! Consider, if thou lovest thy life,
 All men love theirs. If thou speak ill of us,
 Truths many and unwelcome thou shalt hear.

CHO Too much reviling now and heretofore!

Desist, old man, cease thy vituperations.

ADM. Speak on. I've had my say. And if the truth
 Is hateful, thou shouldst not have sinned toward me.

PHE. In dying for thee, I would have sinned far worse.

ADM. Is it the same for young and old to die?

PHE. I claim men ought to live one life, not two.

ADM. But thou, it seems, wouldst outlive Zeus himself.

PHE. Dost curse thy parents? We did thee no harm.

ADM. I curse thee for thy fondness for long life.

PHE. Is not this corpse borne forth instead of thine?

ADM. No; as a sign of thy faint-heartedness.

PHE. She did not die for us. Thou'lt not say that.

ADM. Enough!

May'st thou come some day to dire need of me!

PHE. Wed many women, that the more may die.

ADM. The blame is thine; thou didst refuse the death.

PHE. Because this Sun-god's light is dear to me.

ADM. A craven's soul is thine and not a man's.

PHE. I have not given thee my corpse to mock!

ADM. When death doth near thee thou shalt die disgraced.

PHE. When I have died, I'll care not for disgrace.

ADM. Ye gods! old age is full of shamelessness.

PHE. She was not shameless, no; but witless rather.

ADM. Go hence, and let me bury this dear woman.

PHE. I go and thou, who alone hast murdered her,
Alone must lay her underneath the sod.

But thou hast yet to satisfy her brother;

No longer be Acastus deemed a man

Till he avenge his sister's blood with thine.

ADM. May thou and thy companion go accursed,
And childless, though your son is still alive.
And growing old, as ye too well deserve,
Come not with me beneath a common roof.

[*Exeunt Pheres and his wife.*]

If there were need of such formality

I formally renounce my childhood's home!

But let us now proceed, and lift the corse

Which resteth at our feet. On to the tomb!

[*Exit.*]

FUNERAL PROCESSIONAL.

[*Music adapted from the Oberammergau Passion Play.*]

CHO. Oh farewell, ah farewell

Noble lady, dearest, best;

Where thou goest now to dwell

May the Death-gods grant thee rest;

And if favors over there

Wait the pious dead alone,

Mayst thou have thy blessed share

And thy seat by Hades' throne!

Oh farewell, ah farewell,

Oh farewell, ah farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter a man-servant.

SERVANT. From many distant lands have come the guests
Whom I have fed within Admetus' home;
But never yet have I received for him
So mannerless a guest as now hath come;
For though he saw the master's funeral woe,
He still dared enter at our open gates,
And then with our misfortunes clear in mind
He, tactless, took the dainties we could serve,
While, if we loitered with the dish he wished,
He roared that we should fetch it him at once,—
Then takes the wreathed goblet in his hands
And drinks the liquor of the vineyard down
Until the flame of wine is in his brain.
He twines his head with sprigs of myrtle-boughs
And howls a song that is no song at all.
Then one might hear two tunes, for heedlessly
Amid Admetus' sorrows he did sing, while we
Attendants wailed our mistress' dirge and wept,
But showed the guest no traces of our tears,
Since thus Admetus had enjoined on us.

So in this house I have to entertain
A guest that proves some knave and vagabond;
And while my mistress goes her last, sad way
I cannot follow in the funeral train
Nor raise my hand and voice lamentingly
For her who was a mother to us slaves,
And often she hath meekly shielded us
From passions of her husband. Is it wrong
For me to hate our guest in times like these?

Enter HERACLES.

HER. Ho! Why this sad and melancholy look?
The servant needs no long face for the guest;
He should receive his man with cheery soul.
But thou, although thou seest thy master's friend,
Wouldst welcome him with wrinkling, gloomy brow

Just for some sorrow that concerns thee not.

Come here, and thou shalt grow a wiser man
Canst thou philosophize on mortal things?
I think not; for how couldst thou? Learn from me:
Death is a debt all mortals have to pay,
And none of them is wise enough to know
If he shall live to see to-morrow come,
Because the paths of fortune run obscure,—
Her courses are not taught in any school.
Now hear my words and take advice from me:
Rejoice, be glad, drink, count this day-by-day
Existence thine, all else belongs to Chance!
Revere the goddess Venus, far most sweet
To mortal man,—a kindly goddess, she!
Let all else pass, and heed what I have said
If I have spoken sense—I think I have!

Come, wilt thou not dismiss such heavy griefs,
And passing through the door with wreathed brow
Drink wine with me? For well I know, my friend,
The plash of falling liquor in the cup
Will change thy downcast, dismal look to joy.
We mortals ought to think our mortal thoughts,
For to all solemn men with scowling brows,
If it were left for me to judge, I would say,
Life is not truly life but misery.

SERV. We understand all that but deal with facts
Unfitting revelry or laughing speech

HER. Well, she who died was from beyond your gates;
Grieve not, the master and the mistress live.

SERV. Live! How? Dost thou not know the sorrow here?

HER. I do; unless thy lord hath lied to me.

SERV. Too truly he is far too fond of guests.

HER. Need he for alien dead mistreat a friend?

SERV. Too little alien to this house was she.

HER. Had he some sorrow that he told me not.

SERV. Farewell! Go forth! My master's woes are mine.

HER. This tone doth not befit an alien woe.

SERV. If alien, I would not have jarred thy glee.

HER. Have I received false treatment from my friend?

SERV. You came untimely to be entertained.

We sorrow now. You saw the shaven heads,
Dark robes of death and—

HER. Who is the dead? A child?
Or has the aged father passed away?

SERV. Not so, oh gues', Admetus' wife hath died.

HER. The wife! and could ye entertain me still?

SERV. He was ashamed to turn thee from his door.

HER. O hapless husband! How great this loss for thee.

SERV. Not she alone, but we as well have died.

HER. Ah well I wondered when I saw the face,
The shaven head, and eyes bedewed with tears.—
He said he carried to the grave a dame
Who lived with him, and thus he put me off.
Against my will I entered his abode
And feasted of his hospitality
While he was thus employed. Shall I wear wreaths
And sing to Bacchus songs of revelry?
I blame thee for thou shouldst have told me all;—
How Death's dark pall was hanging o'er the house.
Where doth he bury her? Will he be there?

SERV. The path is straight down the Larissa road.
There thou shalt find the suburb sepulcher.

HER. O ever laboring heart and hand of mine,
Now prove the son Alcmene bore to Zeus!
Thy duty is to bring the dead to life
And place Alcestis in this home again;
Thus shall I render service to the king.
Behold, I go to lie in wait for Death,
The black-gowned god. I shall find him now I think
Drinking the sacrifices near the tomb.
And if I lie in wait for him and spring
And seize him from my ambuscade and throw
These arms encircling round the hated god,
No man could ever snatch away my prey,
Though struggling,—till he has surrendered her.
But should Death come not to his clotted meal
And thus my hunt be vain, I shall descend
To those unlighted homes, where dwell the shades,—

To Cora and her king; and there demand,
 And trust to lead Alcestis to the light, ³
 And place her in the arms of my good host
 Who hesitated not to welcome me
 Though tribulation rested over him.
 Respecting me, he nobly hid his grief.
 What man in Thessaly, or who in Greece
 More kind to friends than King Admetus is?
 He shall not therefore say he entertained
 A guest ungrateful for his nobleness.

[*Exit.*]

Enter ADMETUS returning with the mourners.

ADM. Oh ye hateful approaches, and hated shape
 Of this widowed house whence we mourn the escape
 Of the soul of the mistress! Ah me! Alas!
 Shall I cry or be silent? Stand stolid or pass
 To the door that beholds my undoing?
 My mother has had an unfortunate son,—
 So I envy the ghosts, and my heart dotes upon
 A far-away home in the palace of Death,
 For earth hath no joy in its light or its breath;
 Its sun hath no brightness; its paths have no pleasure,
 For Hades and Death have made 'way with the treasure
 That the love of my soul was pursuing.

CHO. On! On! Seek thy hall!

ADM. Woe! Woe!

CHO. Thy woes crushing fall.

ADM. Ah! Ah!

CHO. Though tears thou mayst shed,

ADM. Alas!

CHO. They help not the dead.

ADM. Ah me! Ah me!

CHO. To see thy loved one's beauty never again,
 That is thy destiny—and that thy pain.

ADM. Ye touch me where my very soul is sore;
 A man's worst sorrow is to see no more
 His faithful wife. 'T were better ne'er have led
 My lady homeward on the day I wed.

I envy him who has nor wife nor child
 To aggravate his simple lot with wild
 Calamity and sorrow sure to come
 And blight the wedding joys that make his home.
 Why need a man endure such deep distress
 Who might have lived in single blessedness?

CHO. 'Neath Fate's arm low bending!

ADM. Woe! Woe!

CHO. In woes never ending—

ADM. Ah! Ah!

CHO. Yet baffle the weight

ADM. Alas!

CHO. And hardness of Fate,

ADM. Ah me! Ah me!

CHO. For thou art not the first to lose a wife;
 Such loss is common to our mortal life.

ADM. Oh too common the sorrow, too bitter the grief
 For the loved ones we bury! Ah why did ye keep
 Me from throwing myself in despair of relief
 To the deep of the tomb of the dear one asleep
 To awaken no more, by the side of the chief

Of all women to lie? For thus Death, at one sweep,
 Would have taken two souls of the faithful to keep.

CH.-LEADER. I had a kinsman once whose only son had died,
 A worthy lad, just showing youth's bright bloom;
 And yet, my kinsman bore the blow,—was pacified,
 Though gray in age and tottering to his tomb.

ADM. Oh shadow of home, can I enter within?
 Can I live where I know that the life that has been
 Cometh never again. How the message of fate
 Has changed since the day when with songs at my gate
 And bright wedding torches I led by the hand
 My sweet wife to my door! Then the gay noisy band
 Of young revelers followed the glad way we went
 To praise our high fortune and noble descent;—
 Now dirges and groanings are sounding instead
 Of the hymns hymeneal. I am solemnly led
 By the black-veiled attendants who beckon me on
 To the chamber of love I must enter alone.

CHO. So close to thy prosperity thy trial came
It found thee inexperienced in grief;
But thou shalt live to know all men have felt the same
Sad loss,—whose commonness is its relief.

ADM. Oh friends! More fortunate her lot than mine
It seems to me—perhaps to others not—
Indeed, no grief will ever touch her now;
From many sorrows she is nobly freed,
But I unjustly miss my destined fate;
I still live on—at last I understand!
Can I, alone, return to this drear home?
Whom shall I greet? By whom be greeted there?
A happy entrance can I find? Where turn?
Within, drear emptiness takes hold of me
To see the seats where she was wont to sit,
The unkept house, the floors left dusty now;
The children round my knees lament their loss,
And servants with them for their mistress mourn.
Such troubles are at home, and when I turn
Mine eyes to view my realm, I shall behold
Thessalian nuptials filling all the land
And see companions of my own lost wife
In gatherings of joy. Hard to endure
Will be my life amid their happiness.
Whoever is mine enemy will say,
“He lives! A coward, for he dared not die,
“But gave the life of his own wedded wife,
“To save his soul from Hades’ dark domain.
“Does he appear to be a man? He hates
“His parents, for he feared to die himself.”
If such repute is mine beside my woe,
What glory can it be for me to live
With evil fortune and an evil name?

FOURTH STASIMON [*Choral Song.*]

[*Music by Prof. B. D. Allen, in the Phrygian Mode, and adapted from Bruch's Arminius.*]

STROPHE A.

We've pondered deep and voyaged around
This earth on land and sea,
Yet nothing stronger have we found
Than stern NECESSITY.
We know no mystic medicine
Nor drug by Phœbus given;
The fates of weary men are in
The high decree of Heaven!

ANTISTROPHE A.

FATE hears no prayers by mortals said;
No altars smoke to her;
Ere Zeus may bend a gracious head
He must with her confer.
No metals of the deepest mines
Are strong enough for FATE.
No gentle graciousness refines
Her adamantine hate.

STROPHE B.

Bear up! No tears can ever raise
Our dead to life and light.
The very sons of God we praise
Go darkling in Death's night.
Right dear she was while still with us,
And dear in death shall be,
Most noble and most generous,
The wife that died for thee!

ANTISTROPHE B.

Let not her tomb unhonored lie,
But stand a temple fair,

A height where many a passer-by
 Shall offer up this prayer:
Ah once this gentle lady died
To save her lord my king;
Now may her spirit glorified
Attend the prayer I bring!

EXODOS.

CHO.-LEADER. Now, as I think, Alcmenè's son, oh King,
 Comes back to claim thine hospitality.

Enter HERACLES with ALCESTIS veiled.

HER. Before a friend one ought to speak the truth,
 Admetus, not to hide away one's woe
 And cause for grief within a silent breast.
 I deemed myself a trusted friend of thine,
 Worthy of knowing thy calamities.
 Thou didst not tell me 'twas thy wife had died
 But to thy home received me, all as though
 The dead one were a stranger at thy hearth
 So while thou wert bowed down with such a grief
 I crowned my head, and in this saddened house
 I made libations to the gods of drink.
 Blame should be thine for treating thus thy friend;
 Yet would I not add blame to misery.
 Now hear the reason why I turned my steps
 And came again to thy bereaved abode!
 This woman keep for me till I return
 And lead from wintry Thrace the steeds I seek
 When I have slain the great Bistonian king.
 But if I die—as Zeus grant I may not,
 But may my father grant a safe return!—
 I give her thee to serve within thine home.
 I won her with a struggle as you shall hear,
 For on my way I found a town engaged
 In holding contests of their athletes' prowess;
 From thence I won and brought away my prize.
 To those who conquered in the lighter games

Horses were given; for the heavier sports,
 Boxing and wrestling, cattle were the prize,
 And with the cattle came this woman too.
 As I was passing, how could I neglect
 The opportunity? So, as I said,
 Be careful of this lady. I stole her not,
 But won her by the wrestling of these arms.
 Some day, perhaps, thou wilt approve my gift.

ADM. 'Twas not dishonoring or hating thee
 I hid the sad misfortune of my wife;
 But it had been a grief upon a grief
 If thou hadst gone to bide with other host.
 Enough to mourn a sorrow of mine own.

As for the woman, I beseech thee, prince,
 Find, if thou canst, some man of Thessaly—
 And thou hast multitudes of Pheræ-friends—
 Find one who hath not lost what I have lost
 To take and keep this woman safe for thee,
 Lest thou remind me of calamity.
 I could not keep from weeping should I see
 Her in the halls. Add not disease to one
 Diseased; for now I am weighed down enough
 With hard misfortune. Where in all the house
 Could we bestow so beautiful a woman?
 By her attire she shows that she is young;
 Then shall she share my palace with my men?
 Nay; how could she dwell purely with them here?
 I have regard to the safety of thy prize,
 And young men's hearts, Oh Heracles, are wild!
 Shall I maintain her in my dead wife's rooms?
 How could I bid her take that bridal couch?
 Methinks I would fear a censure doubly just,
 Both from the town, a charge that I
 Am traitor to the wife who worked my weal,
 And from the dead, well worth my reverence.
 With caution must I guard my words and deeds.
 But thou, O lady, whosoe'er thou art,
 Remindest me in form and gentle mien
 Of my Alcestis.—Take her from my sight!

Slay not the slain. As I behold her there,
I seem to see my wife before my face.
She grieves my heart and from my welling eyes
The tears of anguish flow. It is my lot
At last to know the bitterness of loss!

CHO. I could not call thy lot a happy one,
But one must bear, however fortune leads,
The trials laid upon him by the gods.

HER. Oh that I had the power to end thy grief,
And bring thy wife from Hades' nether halls
To see again the glorious light of life!
How freely would I take the risk for thee.

ADM. I know that thou wouldst wish it. What of that?
The dead come never to life's light again.

HER. Be not excessive. Sturdily bear up!

ADM. 'Tis easier to advise "bear up" than bear.

HER. What wouldst thou gain shouldst thou persist in grief?

ADM. 'Tis not for gain, but my passion leads me on!

HER. To love the dead thrusts on a man to tears—

ADM. And ruins me and—more than I can tell.

HER. Thou hast lost a noble wife. Who would deny?

ADM. So that I care no longer for my life.

HER. Ah, time will heal; thy misery is new.

ADM. Yea, Time may heal, if the Time thou meanst be Death.

HER. A wife and other loves will comfort thee.

ADM. Hush! How thou speakest! There my mind revolts.

HER. Revolts? Not wed but keep a widowed couch?

ADM. No wife shall ever lie beside this man.

HER. That vow can never help the dead at all.

ADM. I ought to honor her where'er she is.

HER. I praise thee, but the world will call thee fool.

ADM. Ay, call me fool, but bridegroom call me not.

HER. I praise thee, thou art faithful to thy wife.

ADM. When I forsake her may I meet my death.

HER. Well, take this slave of mine within the house.

ADM. No, by thy father Zeus, I beg of thee.

HER. If thou dost not, it is thine own mistake.

ADM. But if I do I sting my heart with woe.

HER. Obey! This favor may a duty prove.

- ADM. Ah me! Would thou hadst never won the prize.
HER. But since I won, my prize is thine as well.
ADM. Thy words are fair, but let the woman go.
HER. She goes if go she must, but must she go?
ADM. She must, unless her going angers thee.
HER. I know a thing thou dost not, and insist.
ADM. I yield, although I am unwilling still.
HER. Sometime thou wilt thank me for it; now obey.
ADM. Then, servants, take her in if it must be.
HER. To servants I shall not entrust this prize.
ADM. Then take the woman to the house thyself.
HER. Not I, but thou shalt lead her to thy door.
ADM. I will not touch her; let her go alone.
HER. To thy right arm alone I hand her safe.
ADM. Compelled by thee, I act against my will.
HER. Take heart; stretch forth thy hand and touch thy guest.
ADM. I stretch my hand but turn my head away
As though there were a Gorgon's head to see!
HER. You have her?
ADM. Yes.
HER. Keep her in safety then!
Count Heracles a guest both kind and good.
But glance at her and see if she doth still
Resemble thy dear wife. Methinks she doth;
Then let thy grief turn joy and happiness.
ADM. Ye gods, what shall I say? A miracle!
Nay, mocking gods have sent an empty joy.
HER. Not so, thou dost behold thy very wife.
ADM. I fear thou'st brought some phantom from the shades
HER. Thou never foundst me juggling with their ghosts!
ADM. It cannot be the wife whom I entombed.
HER. I do not marvel at thy lack of faith.
ADM. But may I speak and touch her as I used?
HER. Yes, speak. For thou hast all thou didst desire.
ADM. Oh face and form, the dearest and the best,
I hold thee,—a vision I had dared not hope!
HER. Thou holdest her; may there be no jealous gods!
ADM. O noble son of greatest Zeus, I pray
That happiness be thine; thy sire I pray

To keep thee safely. Thou alone restoredst
Mine own to me. But tell me how thou broughtest
The dead from darkness to the light of life.

HER. By joining battle with the god of Death.

ADM. Come, tell the story of thy fight with Death.

HER. I hid me by the tomb and clutched him there.

ADM. Why stands she thus in silent revery?

HER. Thou hast no right to hear her voice until,
Released from the nether gods by offerings
And purifying rites which she shall make,
The third day comes and she is free to speak.
But lead thy wife within and honest still
In future days, Admetus, have regard
To all thy guests. Farewell. I go to do
The labor that my lord Eurystheus bids.

ADM. Good friend, remain with us and share our hearth

HER. Some time I may, I now must hasten on.

ADM. Success be thine, I pray, and mayst thou come
With homeward joy. Let citizens in all
The land make dances for our fortune turned
By thee from bad to good. Let altars reek
With blood in purifying sacrifice.
We must confess that we now set our lives
To happier harmonies than heretofore.

CHO. Oh many the changes that Fortune may bring,
And to us who are faithless the gods love to fling
The gifts we despair of in long suffering,
To reveal us our hope while we hopelessly sing.—
So endeth our song for our queen and our king.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]



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